

Message Text

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SUBJECT: EC COMMISSION OFFICIAL EXPRESSES INTEREST IN EXCHANGING
VIEWS WITH US OFFICIALS IN AID AFRICAN BUREAU

REF: (A) EC BRUSSELS 814, (B) EC BRUSSELS 645, (C) 76 EC

BRUSSELS 12552, (D) 76 EC BRUSSELS 118330, (E) 76 EC BRUSSELS A-501

(F) 76 EC BRUSSELS A-541

1. SUMMARY: EC COMMISSION DIRECTOR OF LOME CONVENTION AID
ACTIVITIES HAS EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN EXCHANGING VIEWS
ON US/EC OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA WITH APPROPRIATE
AID OFFICIALS. MISSION SUGGESTS THAT AID FAVORABLY CONSIDER
THIS IDEA. END SUMMARY.

2. COMMISSION DIRECTOR ROBERT COHEN, WHO IS IN CHARGE OF
EC DEVELOPMENT AID ACTIVITIES IN THE 49 AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN
AND PACIFIC (ACP) COUNTRIES OF THE LOME CONVENTION
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(SEE REF. E), DISCUSSED WITH MISSION OFFICER POSSIBLE
WAYS TO IMPROVE US/EC COORDINATION ON AID MATTERS.
COHEN SUGGESTS COORDINATION MIGHT BE ON THREE LEVELS:

1) POLICY REVIEW OF AID PRIORITIES, PLANS AND COUNTRY
ALLOCATIONS; 2) OPERATIONAL DISCUSSIONS, PERHAPS AT THE
ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF OFFICER DIRECTOR LEVEL, OF
SPECIFIC COUNTRY AND REGIONAL PROGRAMS, WITH ATTENTION

TO CERTAIN SECTORS OR PROJECTS; AND 3) FIELD COORDINATION BETWEEN USAID MISSION AND EC DELEGATES, WHICH MIGHT FOCUS ON PARALLEL DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTRY PROGRAMS, AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON PROJECTS.

2. COHEN BELIEVES IT MIGHT BE TOO EARLY IN THE NEW ADMINISTRATION TO SUGGEST A HIGH LEVEL POLICY REVIEW AT THIS TIME. HE NOTES THAT THE US HOSTED THE LAST SUCH MEETING IN JANUARY 1976 AND CONSEQUENTLY THE EC SHOULD APPROPRIATELY HOST THE NEXT ONE IN BRUSSELS. (COMMENT: SEVERAL COMMISSION OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT IN THE 1976 MEETING BECAUSE OF A LACK OF SPECIFICITY AND FOLLOW UP. THEY PLAN TO PREPARE CAREFULLY THE AGENDA OF ANY FUTURE MEETING TO ASSURE A MORE PRODUCTIVE EXCHANGE.)

3. COHEN FAVORS GOING AHEAD WITH OPERATIONAL LEVEL COORDINATION AT THIS TIME AND WOULD WELCOME THE VISIT OF USAID OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS EACH OTHER'S COUNTRY PROGRAMS AND PLANS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE HAS AN IMMEDIATE NEED FOR AID PLANS IN FOLLOWING AREAS: 1) THE SAHEL REGION, WITH ATTENTION TO CLUBS DES AMIS DU SAHEL (SEE REF. D), 2) SOUTHERN AFRICA (SEE REF. E); 3) THE TRANSPORTATION SECTOR, WITH EMPHASIS ON TANZANIA, ZAIRE, BURUNDI AND RWANDA (SEE REF. A); AND 4) COORDINATION OF REGIONAL AND SPECIFIC COUNTRY PROJECTS (SEE REF. C). THE US HAS ALSO RAISED POSSIBILITY OF EC PARTICIPATION IN AN AID SEMI-ARID FOOD GRAINS PROJECT (SEE REF. D).

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4. WITH APPROPRIATE PREPARATION, MISSION BELIEVES US/EC OPERATIONAL LEVEL DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE PRODUCTIVE. THE EC WILL BE COMMITTING OVER \$1 BILLION ANNUAL IN AID FUNDS TO AFRICA IN THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS. (ITS OVERALL COMMITMENTS, INCLUDING ASSOCIATED AND MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES, WILL EXCEED \$2BILLION EACH YEAR DURING THE 1977-79 PERIOD). US/EC AID ACTIVITIES SHOULD PROCEED IN PARALLEL AND COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER. MISSION CONSEQUENTLY SUGGESTS THAT AID CONSIDER RESPONDING FAVORABLY TO PROPOSED OPERATION LEVEL COORDINATION WITH EC. WE WOULD ENCOURAGE AID ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR AFRICA OR OTHER APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS TO STOP BY BRUSSELS DURING VISITS THEY MIGHT BE MAKING TO AFRICA. FIRST OF THESE EXCHANGES MIGHT INCLUDE DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT US AID ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA, BY REGION, COUNTRY AND SECTOR. HINTON

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